

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 AGR-20 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00

COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CIEP-02

STR-08 TRSE-00 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 SS-14 NSC-10 L-03

H-02 PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-12 MC-02 PM-09 RSR-01 /177 W

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R 301630 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6484

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USCINCEUR

SECDEF

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO

USNMR SHAPE

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EUCOM AND USNMR SHAPE FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR PINT MASS EEC NO FR

SUBJECT: NORWEGIANS TRY FOR SOME LEVERAGE WITH FRENCH ON
EC TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

BEGIN SUMMARY. THE NORWEGIAN GOVT HAS REPORTEDLY THREATENED
TO RECONSIDER ITS PLANNED PURCHASE OF FRENCH " CROTALE"
SURFACE- TO- AIR MISSILES IN AN EFFORT TO OVERCOME WHAT
MANY NORWEGIANS REGARD AS FRENCH OBSTRUCTIONISM IN THE
CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS TO CONCLUDE A TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN
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NORWAY AND THE COMMON MARKET. PRESS REPORTS OF THIS DEVELOPMENT, AND OF COMPARABLE PRESSURE BY THE FRENCH MORE THAN A YEAR AGO WHEN NORWAY WAS ATTEMPTING TO WORK OUT A MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMON MARKET, HAVE CREATED A POLITICAL STORM HERE IN OSLO AND HAVE INJECTED A NOTE OF EXCITEMENT AND POLITICAL MANEUVER INTO THE DREARY AND FREQUENTLY DISHEARTENING ACCOUNTS OF NORWAY'S FRUSTRATING NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN ACCEPTABLE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMON MARKET. END SUMMARY

1. PRESS AND TV REPORTS IN OSLO HAVE ALLEGED, AND PRIMIN LARS KORVALD HAS LARGELY ADMITTED, THAT THE THREE- PARTY KORVALD GOVT HAS THREATENED TO RECONSIDER NORWAY'S PLANS TO PURCHASE THE FRENCH " CROTALE" SURFACE- TO- AIR MISSILE SYSTEM UNLESS THE FRENCH ADOPT A MORE LENIENT POSITION WITH REGARD TO NORWEGIAN REQUIREMENTS, ESPECIALLY IN THE ALUMINUM INDUSTRY, FOR A TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMON MARKET.

2. THE ALLEGATIONS ALSO SUGGEST THAT THIS IS A TURN- ABOUT FROM EVENTS OF MORE THAN A YEAR AGO WHEN FRANCE ALLEGEDLY PUT PRESSURE ON THE NORWEGIANS TO DECIDE IN FAVOR OF " CROTALE"-- AS OPPOSED TO THE U. S. IMPROVED HAWK-- OR FACE FRENCH DISPLEASURE IN THE THEN- CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS FOR A NORWEGIAN ACCESSION AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMON MARKET.

3. THE ISSUES RAISED HAVE CREATED A BIT OF A TEMPEST ON THE POLITICAL SCENE IN OSLO WITH VARIOUS POLITICAL ELEMENTS SEEKING TO CAPITALIZE ON THE GOVT'S EMBARRASSMENT ABOUT THE LACK OF SUCCESS IN THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS FOR A TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMON MARKET; AND THERE ARE OTHERS WHO-- STANDING ON THE PARLIAMENT'S PREROGATIVES IN DETERMINING NORWEGIAN POLICY-- ARE SUGGESTING THAT THE GOVT'S TREATMENT OF THE PARLIAMENT ON BOTH THE EC QUESTION AND THE PROPOSED " CROTALE" PURCHASE HAS BEEN SHODDY.

4. LABOR PARTY MEMBERS HAVE DENIED THAT THE DECISION IN FAVOR OF THE " CROTALE" SYSTEM-- TAKEN MORE THAN A YEAR AGO AFTER FULL EVALUATION OF FRENCH AND US SYSTEMS-- HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE THEN LABOR GOVT'S POLICY DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN ACCESSION AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMON MARKET. OTHERS, ALSO INCLUDING LABOR PARTY MEMBERS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAVE DECRIED THE CURRENT LINKAGE OF THE TWO NEGOTIATIONS.

5. AT THE HEART OF THE CONTROVERSY IS PRIMIN LARS KORVALD WHO WAS SUMMONED BEFORE A TWO- HOUR SECRET SESSION OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (EXTENDED) OF THE PARLIAMENT ON MARCH 29 TO EXPLAIN THE GOVT' S POSITION. KORVALD ADMITTED IN A PRESS RELEASE ON THE SAME DAY THAT IN THE ON- GOING " CROTALE" NEGOTIATIONS, THE NORWEGIAN SIDE HAD TOLD THE FRENCH MANUFACTURERS THAT IN A CONTRACT OF SUCH " GREAT POLITICO- COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE" AS THIS ONE, IT IS " NATURAL" ON THE NORWEGIAN SIDE TO REGARD THE MATTER " IN A WIDER CONTEXT." THOSE WHO HAVE BARGAINED FOR ARMS WITH THE NORWEGIANS KNOW THEY ARE TOUGH BARGAINERS WHO ALWAYS NEGOTIATE WITH " THE WIDER CONTEXT" IN MIND; THAT ALONE WOULD NOT MAKE THE ACTIONS OF THE KORVALD GOVT REPREHENSIBLE IN THE EYES OF THE NORWEGIAN PUBLIC. BUT IN THIS PRE- ELECTION PERIOD, WITH NEGOTIATIONS FOR A TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMON MARKET LOOKING MORE SOUR AND DISMAL BY THE DAY, AND WITH THE POLITICAL SCENE STILL REACTING TO THE REFERENDUM REJECTION OF COMMON MARKET MEMBERSHIP LAST FALL, THE CONTROVERSY IS A NATURAL ONE FOR POLITICAL POSTURING.

6. IN A FURTHER EFFORT TO DEFUSE THE CONTROVERSY, THE PRIMIN HAS SOUGHT TO EMPHASIZE THE CONSUMMATE IMPORTANCE OF THE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMON MARKET, ADDING, " I THINK ALL POLITICIANS AGREE THAT WE MUST SEEK TO ARRIVE AT AS GOOD A SOLUTION TO THE TRADE AGREEMENT QUESTION AS POSSIBLE, BUT I DO NOT THINK THESE TWO MATTERS (I. E. THE TRADE AGREEMENT AND THE " CROTALE" QUESTION) WILL BE INTER- DEPENDENT."

7. COMMENT: WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE LIFE OF THE GOVT IS THREATENED BY THIS ISSUE, BUT IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THE PARLIAMENT AND PRESS WILL ALLOW THE ISSUE TO FADE AWAY AS THE GOVT SEEMS TO WISH. AT A MINIMUM, THE LABOR OPPOSITION IS LIKELY TO SEEK WIDER AIRING OF THE ISSUE AFTER TRADE NEGOTIATIONS ARE COMPLETED BUT BEFORE THE SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS. CROWE

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EUR
LONDON
PARIS
PRETORIA
ROME

SECSTATE WASHDC
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